AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 159 given in the Rajya Sabha on 25th July, 2000 and State:

(a) whether the disinvestment plan of IA and AI would increase the possibilities for private airlines;

(b) what is the number of private airlines in the country at present; and

(c) what is Government's reaction on issues raised in a newsitem captioned "Airports Authority cancels credit facility to Sahara Air" published in Asian Age dated May 4, 2000?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Private airlines are already operating scheduled services in the country. Disinvestment of AI/IA may not affect the commercial prospects of scheduled private airlines. However, this and all other related issues are being looked into in detail.

(b) There are two airlines operating scheduled services in the country namely, Jet Airways and Sahara Airlines.

(c) Recovery of dues for the services/facilities provided to scheduled airlines is a commercial transaction between the AAI and concerned airlines.

Modernisation of Hyderabad Airport

1733. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal before Government to modernise the Hyderabad Airport to the International standards with all modern facilities;

(b) if so, the likely cost of modernisation of Hyderabad Airport; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Hyderabad airport has already been upgraded with all modern infrastructural facilities at a cost of Rs. 100 crores approximately. The Government has also declared Hyderabad Airport as an international airport.

MOU on Airlink with China

1734. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal from the Chinese Government for opening of an direct air link to Calcutta and Mumbai as sister cities;

(b) if so, the steps taken up in this regard; and

(c) the reasons for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between India and China for air link in 1997 as pending?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal from the Peoples Republic of China.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Memorandum of Understanding of 1997 provides for the capacity and frequency entitlement for the designated airlines of India and China to operate to each other's territory. However actual operation of flights is left to the commercial judgement of airlines.

Improvement of Runways

1735. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Airports Authority of India (AAI) is not devoting attention to task of improving the runways at the airports;

(b) if so. whether it is a fact that its haphazard planning has even led to a deterioration in the standard of the runway at Mumbai and Delhi; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Improvement of IA's Revenue Management

1736. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new C.M.D. of IA has promised to look in depth cost benefit analysis of various promotional packages to consumers and also to improve Airlines on time performance which has lately dipped to 60 per cent from 80 per cent in the recent past; and